

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRINIDAD CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ladwig called the open meeting to order at 6:00pm. Council members in attendance: Miller, West, Ladwig, Grover, Davies. City Staff in attendance: City Manager Eli Naffah, City Clerk Gabriel Adams.

II. CLOSED SESSION REPORT – *The Council met at the conclusion of the open session.*

1. Public Employee Performance Evaluation for City Manager Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Per STR Committee Chairman Dick Bruce's recommendation, pull agenda item number 5.

*Motion (Miller/West) to move approve the agenda as amended. **Passed unanimously.***

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – *No minutes to approve.*

11-12-19 cc, 11-19-19 scc, 11-26-19 cc2 will be prepared for review in January.

VI. COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS/COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Grover: Met with Miller on Climate Action Plan. Good working meeting. Miller would like to see improvements on the City website for collecting ideas regarding the climate action plan.

Miller: CCNM: Met for their quarterly meeting to discuss trail signage, seabird monitoring, beach clean-ups. RCEA: Update on Biomass, Wind Energy.

West: HCAOG: Last Chance Grade update. \$10 million to raise the highway level 17 feet. 1-6 year expectancy. Costs \$7 million/year to keep the highway open. Bypass construction scheduled for summer 2029.

Ladwig: Announced Monday's with the Mayor at the Café, 7:30am-9:00am, informal.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

City Manager Naffah highlighted items listed in the written staff activity report. Considering a mid-year budget review in January, along with a capital improvement plan discussion.

HCSO Sergeant Kevin Miller announced stats and calls for service, and also that Deputy Mathieson would be reassigned in January, and Deputy Joe Jager would be taking over.

VIII. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

(Three (3) minute limit per Speaker unless Council approves request for extended time.)

Mayor Ladwig read aloud a letter submitted by resident **Alan Grau**, suggesting that the Mayor recuse himself from Discussion items #3 and 4.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Staff Activity Report – November 2019
2. Financial Statements October 2019
3. Law Enforcement Report November 2019

*Motion (West/Grover) to approve the consent agenda as written. **Passed unanimously.***

XI. DISCUSSION/ACTION AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discussion/Decision Regarding Proclamation 2019-02; Human Rights Awareness Month.

Mayor Ladwig read the Proclamation aloud. Trinidad Resident and Humboldt County Human Rights Commission representative Erin Rowe announced the Kindness Campaign and accepted the Proclamation.

There was no public comment.

Councilmembers Miller and Grover thanked Richard for the presentation.
*Motion (Grover/West) to approve Proclamation 2019-02. **Passed unanimously.***

2. Discussion/Decision to Award Consultant Agreement for Active Transportation Education Services.
City Manager Naffah explained that the Van Wycke Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity Project includes \$22,000 in Caltrans funding for a non-infrastructure program to increase bicycle and pedestrian safety and mobility and to increase the number of people walking and biking in Trinidad. The City issued the attached RFP for active transportation education services on November 22. The City received only one proposal for the Active Transportation Education Services project from RCAA. The proposal was reviewed by Staff and a Caltrans representative. It was deemed technically sound and meets the City funding requirements for completion of the work.

There were no public or Council comments.

*Motion (Miller/Grover) to award a contract in the amount of \$17,978 to Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA) for professional services for bicycle and pedestrian safety education for the non-infrastructure portion of the Van Wycke Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity Project and authorize the City Manager to execute all applicable documents. **Passed unanimously.***

3. Discussion/Decision to install Radar Feedback Signs on Trinity Street.
City Manager Naffah explained that in an effort to promote compliance with the posted speed limit on Trinity Street near the Trinidad Elementary School, staff recommends the installation of two radar feedback signs. The signs are proposed to be located on Trinity Street between the Trinidad Town Hall and West Street. Both signs would be located within existing City right-of-way.

Council questions included:

Ladwig: Have we considered how this may impact View Street and Ocean Ave?

Davies: Has there been a traffic study done recently on Trinity Street?

Public comment included:

Erin Rowe – Trinidad

Do we have a comparison of the cost of a speed bump vs. the radar signs? A speed hump could be considered as well.

Laura Scott – Trinidad

There needs to be research comparing different technology options. I'm concerned with the light pollution these signs will create, and I doubt they will solve the problem. Speed is an issue on all City streets, and you might get more longevity and compliance with speed bumps or humps.

Dick Bruce – Trinidad

Consider installing speed cameras that issue tickets to violators.

Council comments included:

Miller: I'd like to look into speed humps before spending money on radar feedback signs. I'm afraid people would still ignore them. We need data showing radar feedback is the most effective method of calming traffic before investing in the technology. I would also be in favor of rumble strips in front of speed humps on Trinity and possibly other streets.

Grover: HSU may help with the traffic study.

Davies: The streets are cluttered with flags, business signs, etc. I think we should look at all the possible calming options before making a decision.

West: I think we should table this for now, and consider a traffic study at some point when the budget allows.

Motion (Grover/West) to authorize the City Manager to perform a comprehensive traffic study of all City streets.

Passed unanimously.

4. Discussion/Decision regarding Appointment of Planning Commission Representative to the STR Advisory Committee for 2020.

City Manager Naffah explained that the City appoints a Planning Commission member to serve on the STR Advisory Committee. The City Council should request that the Planning Commission recommend a member to the City Council to serve on the STR Advisory Committee for the year 2020.

Council statements included:

Davies: I'm recusing myself from the vote. However, I will share my comments first. The resolution that formed this committee does not restrict the Planning Commission member term alone. If it's written down, it's not up for interpretation. The complaint was brought forward by an STR manager with a clear conflict of interest. Should everyone align themselves with neutrality to join a volunteer committee? No. People are allowed to have an opinion. I was never in favor of this committee.

Miller: I asked that this item be included on the agenda. To call the kettle black, the dissenting tone from the Planning Commissioner is creating hostility, and this person has a strong, known bias. The intent of the resolution was to create a committee that would help provide recommendations. The STR Ordinance took years to create, and the Council worked diligently to minimize impacts to the residents. The Ordinance works. The 2016 Council's biases were approved when the ordinance passed unanimously. The resolution's intent was to appoint a Planning Commissioner that was neutral. It does not help to be continually attacked while trying to perform a volunteer service. I support having a more neutral Planning Commission representative sit on the committee.

Public comment Included:

Joe Moran – STR Committee Member

I signed up for the committee to be open-minded and listen to comments from all sides. Thank you for including this issue on your agenda tonight.

Jan Nash-Hunt – STR Committee Member

This committee was never going to be without disagreement. It was designed to include people with different interests, but since the beginning there have been angry rants, negativity, and disdain coming from certain individuals. It has raised the anxiety of the other members to the point that we question our participation. We want to help this community by listening and gathering input. Personal agendas need to be left at home. Members need to be balanced and rational, and move beyond the anger. This is not about opinions, it's about behavior. Opinions are welcome. Poor behavior is not.

Adora King – Trinidad

Removing Kathleen Lake from the Committee is not the answer. I've never seen her loud or mouthy. Davies is right about the procedure. I have a vacation rental, but I'm against vacation rentals ☺ How can you say that others on the committee aren't biased? Kathleen Lake is my voice on this committee. Someone on the committee has threatened to sue me over a complaint in the past. How is this fair?

Elaine Weinreb – Trinidad Area Resident

How can you appoint someone and remove them for their opinions?

Dick Bruce – STR Committee Chairman

I agree with Davies. The 2-year term limit applies to all members, but they do serve at the pleasure of the Council. I sent a message to the City Manager expressing my concerns. The committee was set up with a great ability to fail. The hope was to have a Planning Commission member on board that could build bridges. Ms. Lake was an obstruction and exhibited overall difficult behavior. She also made some positive contributions as well. However, her behavior and comments were problematic on all fronts. I would not have a problem with her as a resident member, but I do have a problem with her representing the Planning Commission.

Laura Scott – Trinidad

I'm one of the few long-term renters left in the community. Having any property manager on the committee unfairly outweighs the balance. Lake's freedom of speech is protected. If we aren't following the procedures, why are we here? The money interests are the real bias, and the Mayor should be well aware of this.

Linda Moran – Trinidad Bay Vacation Rentals

A public complaint has been filed regarding an Ethics Code violation against Kathleen Lake. STR managers follow the procedures and care about the issues. I support the Council in their decision to have the Planning Commission reconsider their appointment to the STR Committee.

Written correspondence included:

Rachel Duclos & Marc Gottschalk – Trinidad

Support the letter submitted by Trinidad Retreats owner Jonna Kitchen for consideration tonight, and expressed concern for Ms. Lake's hostility and viability of the STR Committee to function reasonably.

Jonna Kitchen – Trinidad Retreats, owner

Provided a detailed letter supporting the Council in reconsidering the Planning Commissioner appointment to the STR Committee. Also commented in detail on the STR committee recommendations; Meet and Greet policy, requiring a cash security deposit, enforcing sign regulations, and set up a best practices meeting for STR managers.

Alan Grau – Trinidad

Not in favor of reconsidering Kathleen Lake's position on the STR Committee, and wants to see the Meet & Greet policy enforced.

Jacques Beaupre – Trinidad

In favor of leaving Kathleen Lake on the STR Committee.

Council comments included:

Miller: I respect Ms. Lake's opinion, but I also appreciate the comment about poor behavior. That is what this is about.

Grover: I want everyone to be comfortable at meetings - volunteers and participants. If they're not, the membership needs to be reconsidered.

West: The whole idea behind this committee was to bring all sides together. If the committee isn't working, the Council has a responsibility to fix it. Three of the five members tell us there's a problem, and we have to deal with it.

*Motion (Miller/West) to direct the Planning Commission to consider an appointment to the STR Advisory Committee. **Passed 4-0-1. Davies - recused.***

5. Discussion/Decision regarding Recommendations from STR Advisory Committee.
Pulled from the agenda.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT: 8:20pm.

Submitted by:

Gabriel Adams
Trinidad City Clerk

Approved by:

Steve Ladwig
Mayor